The Maid and the Mystery

This Story is set 3 Months before Magical Girl Raising Project
This Story is set 1 Year before Magical Girl Raising Project: Restart

The school bus was bustling with energy. Elementary kids all inside the bus were passing mics, and all of them were singing anime songs.

Noriko was of course having fun and joining in the party as well.

In fact, it could be argued that Noriko was probably the indirect cause of all this fun. For Noriko is secretly a Magical Girl named Nokko-Chan.

Nokko-Chan's ability is to be able to influence the emotions of other people.

The fact that Noriko herself was also having fun also made the emotional influence stronger.

Noriko enjoyed this. Throughout her life, she had always strived to make people feel happy and at ease, and this was pure bliss.

It was the beginning of Summer break, and the elementary kids were all on a trip to the mountains to camp out.

This was going to be one of their first school-wide camping trip, and Noriko is going to make sure it goes off without a hitch.

After about 3 hours' drive from the outskirts of the city, they reached their location. A remote place within the mountains.

"Hey, hey, look over there!" one of the kids shouted. He pointed at some cabins up in the
campsite.

Welcoming yellow cabins. This was going to be a great trip!

Shinobu was a Magical Girl.

She was also a detective.

Fittingly enough, her Magical Girl outfit is also a detective.

Shinobu was Detick Bell, a Magical Girl Detective.

Ever since she was a young girl, she loved mysteries, and wanted to become an actual detective in real life, so she continuously studied and read many mystery novels.

Now Shinobu was hitting her 20s, and she finally ended up as a Private Investigator in a firm.

She would investigate mysterious disappearances, missing persons, murders, robberies, and anything that's rather strange that people can't exactly go to the police about.

Now, she was about to get a job offer from her Chief.

The Chief was already seated in her office. He personally came to see her in fact. She wondered why he was here in the first place.

"Chief. Welcome."

"Hello, Shinobu. I hope you understand the importance of why I'm here."

"Actually, sir. I'm still not quite sure what I'm supposed to be doing?"

"I know you have your mind set on grand things, noble things, Shinobu. Before I'm sure you're up to more jobs, I'd like to offer you one more. Undercover."

"Undercover work, sir?"

"Yes. This one is very discreet. No one should know about it, but it *is* something that I'd like you to do."

"Why me?"

"Because you're the most suited one for all. Think of it as a *test*, Shinobu. If you make it through, I'll clear you in for more demanding work."

"So it's a stress test? A psychological test?"

"Yes. Undercover work can be mentally straining, and we only need you to be there for a
few days at most. Can you handle it?"

"Yes sir! I'm ready! Just tell me the details of the job and I'll be there right away!"

“Shinooobuuuu!!! Could you help me set the tables?”

“Y-Yes ma’am!!!”

“Oh, Shinobu! The kids’ bed needs to be made, make sure *all* the cabins are well and prepared!”

“Roger that, ma’am!”

Shinobu is a camp counselor.

She was being sent to an elementary school Summer camp. Most of the counselors were assigned by the school, but they had volunteer posters put up.

This was apparently the job the Chief had in mind for her.

Stress test, huh…?

Shinobu didn’t forget that evil smile on the Chief’s face.

There were plenty of children running around playfully as Shinobu worked her hardest to
set up tables, prepare the beds, and generally the other hard working things that camp counselors are supposed to do.

“Shinobu, could you do us a favor and cook the children’s food for tonight?”

“H-Huh? Why me?”

“Oh, your employer recommended it personally”

Shinobu smiled, but inside, she was seething with rage.

“…Did he, now? Ehehe... I’ll do my best!”

How did she get into this situation?

Did she piss off the Chief somehow?

These kids will drive her crazy…

Cooking was never Shinobu's strong point, and now she's got to prepare food for a bunch of different children.

After a laborious few hours of cooking, she slowly began banging her head on the wall.

"Shinobu! Time to serve up the dinner!"

"C-Coming, ma'am!"

Now the kids had to be served. It was one of the most stressful things about this job. The
kids were all nice children, but they were kids, so they would be impatient, sometimes get in the way, and all of it was taking a toll on Shinobu.

As the kids are eating, one of the counselors pulled Shinobu to the side.

"So, Shinobu. Tonight we're having a *Test of Courage*. A little fun haunted house maze to scare 'em up a bit in camp. Think you're up for the challenge?"

A chance to get back?

Oh yes.

"Of course I am! Leave it to me!"

When nobody was around, Shinobu quietly transformed to Detick Bell.

Her mission, to give the biggest scare these kids will ever experience in their lives.

And she had just the way to do it.

Detick Bell's Magical Skill is to talk to buildings, but that is inaccurate. It's more accurate to say that Detick Bell can bring out the face of a building with a kiss.

This face is how she communicates with buildings.

Of course, the face is visible to *everyone*. What better way to scare people with? No special effects, just an actual face popping out of the building.

After making a face appear from behind a curtain, Detick Bell began to carefully give instructions to it.

“You’re going to scare the children.”

“What?” said the face.

“Scare the children. Make a scary face. Laugh. Smile. Even smiling will probably scare them if they find you.”

“But I *like* children. They come here to camp every now and then.”

“Oh, no no, it’s not mean-spirited. See, there’s a *Test of Courage* going on, and you’re just playing the part of a scary monster!”

“…Hmm”

“Don’t worry, nobody’s going to get hurt,” said Detick Bell with a smile.

“Hmm… Oh, alright then. If it’s just harmless scaring.”

Success.

“Alright. Keep hidden until one of them shows up, okay? Don’t worry, I’ll be waiting right here when the action happens!”

After a few minutes setting up while the kids were eating, the counselors were ready to put the children through the scare maze.

The line of children came out, being spooked by popping out ghosts and counselors dressed up in preparation.

Bell however, was waiting in the face room, behind some curtains.

Finally, someone showed up. It was a girl, she looked slightly timid and was already anticipating the next scare. Perfect.

As soon as she approached the wall, it happened.

The face popped out, with sinister looking eyes. It stuck its long tongue out as it drooped
down, and he laughed an evil laugh.

The sudden appearance must've scared the girl, because she suddenly started screaming and running away in shock.

"AAAAAAAAAH!!!"

The sound of that scream shocked Detick Bell, and only now did she realize that for some reason that face looked scarier and scarier, and it's also getting quite dark here.

Until…

"Huh.. Ngh…? AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!!!"

She ran out of the curtains towards the counselors, scared out of her life. The panicking children and counselors all ran outside the cabin, scared of *something*.

Whatever happened was unclear, at this point, Bell's mind was just focused on one thing and one thing only:

Run really far away

Noriko didn't mean for it to happen.

Thanks to her Magical Girl experience, she was used to seeing out-of-place things. Also, her mentality is pretty strong, as well.

So she shouldn't really be shocked of anything at this point. But how are you supposed to react when you see a literal face staring at you from the wall?

Of course Noriko would be a bit frightened. She had no idea what to do, panicked, lost control, and now…

…Now everyone was panicking.

Children and counselors being afraid of who knows what. The one thing Noriko was certain about was that they were *afraid*.

She had to fix this.

Just propagate the happy feelings. Make everyone feel calm and relaxed again.

Slowly but surely, everyone went back to their usual selves. Most of them began to laugh
off the situation. Some of the counselors were even blushing in embarrassment.

Noriko, however, was just relieved.

Something like that shouldn't really happen to a veteran Magical Girl like her. Sometimes
it does, but she's glad it didn't cause any major damage this time.

It's late at night though, and after a few rounds of laughter and cleaning up, the entire camp has decided to turn in for the day.

Let's hope tomorrow is not as insane as today.

Shinobu slept calmly that night.

Whatever scared her earlier was enough to make her body tired. After all the hard work of a camp counselor, then the panicking, Shinobu immediately fell asleep the moment she hit her cabin.

Finally, another day… another hellish struggle.

Today's schedule was a barbecue party for the kids. Shinobu woke up slightly groggily. After she finished her morning routine, she headed out to the counselor's meeting section.

When she finally came there,

"Shinobu! You're here, great! We could use your help"

Oh no.

"Sure. What is it?"

“Do you mind cooking the barbeque for the kids. Prepare the meat and all that? We’re going to be setting up the adventure obstacle course.”

“I’m cooking again?” asked Shinobu.

“Your cooking last night was great! I’m sure you’ll do fine in the barbeque”

Shinobu sighed inside, but put out a large smile outside.

“Sure thing! I’ll help out!”

“Thanks, Shinobu!”

Barbeque duty. Here we go.

Shinobu went out to the camp’s kitchen. The dining room had been cleaned, but she still remembered the entire trainwreck of a night that happened here.

Everyone panicking and screaming.

Though she was embarrassed to think about it, Shinobu was doing that as well. She couldn’t exactly grasp *why* though.

Maybe it’s the stress, combined with the rowdy pack of kids.

She’s never been good with children, after all.

At least she should get some peace and quiet when she’s cooking some barbeque. Now, to grab the meat.

Should be in the fridge and…

…Huh?

…There’s no meat.

But Shinobu swore there was meat yesterday. So where did it go?

A routine check of the kitchen revealed nothing. There was no meat. Which can mean only one thing.

Someone or something stole the meat.

Shinobu got excited. This was a *mystery*! Not anything big like a murder, but *still* a mystery!

One of the children? They wouldn't steal the entire meat stack. The counselors? That could get them in trouble. Besides, like the children, they couldn't eat a whole bunch of meat in one night.

Not to mention, Shinobu was certain that most of the kids and camp counselors were tired by that night, and all of them went straight to sleep.

Meaning there must be something else that ate them.

Shinobu's spine chilled. What if it was a wild animal, loose in the camp?

Wolves? They don't live in these mountains. Not anymore. Still, maybe there's a hidden pack somewhere?

Probably not wolves. They'd leave distinct footprints. Besides, they'd have to navigate inside the cabin somehow.

So what about vermin? Mice? The cabins were swept clean, but it's a possibility.

Maybe cockroaches? No, impossible. Mice and cockroaches could steal food, sure. The staff might not have noticed them, sure. But this is a bunch of meat. They'd only steal nibbles and smaller chunks.

So, what in the world could've eaten the meat, be invisible to most people, *and* was probably already in the cabin before-

Shinobu's eyes widened.

She put her arms on her head.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA"

She couldn't help screaming. She was so stupid. How did she forget. Must've been the panic that night.

"*SHIT*!"

“Shinobu? Did you say something in the kitchen?” one of the counselors asked.

“Er-Um, *nothing*! I just… had to sit. Yeah!”

“How’s the barbeque going, Shinobu?”

“Errr….. it’s… great! Gonna take a minute! I hope you don’t mind waiting!”

“Don’t take *too* long!”

“I won’t!”

Shit.

Shinobu transformed into Detick Bell, and went towards the location of the face. Sure enough, she found the face and a pile of meat.

How the face managed to carry it, she doesn’t know.

What’s important is…

“Wha… What are you *doing*!?”

The face looked at her with a guilty expression.

“I’m eating”

“…You’re *eating*? But you’re a *building*!”

“Yes, but there’s always food. I’m curious”

“I *need* that food! I have to prepare it for the kids!”

The face looked at her guiltily again.

“…Sorry”

Then the face munched on some meat.

“No no no, *Stop*! You’re going to get me into trouble. Just… give me the rest of your food. Your job here’s done!”

The face shrugged, and relented.

Shinobu sighed. After getting rid of the face, she facepalmed and took a deep breath.

How is she going to make up for the lost meat? What's she going to do to tell the counselors? How will she explain?

Then… she had an idea.

Noriko was having fun. Her friends were having fun, the camp counselors were all having fun. Now, it seems like she's ready for a little bit of food.

Lunch time was coming soon, and she was curious as to what's in store.

But then, another counselor came up with a big smile.

"Alright kids, it's time for your *adventure*! Today we're doing something different. A *Detective Mystery Scavenger Hunt*!"

The girl announcing the new activity seemed to be excited, yet nervous at the same time. Noriko could tell.

Yet, all the kids were excited. The idea of an adventure got their emotions stirred up. Everyone was in a good mood.

The counselor girl continued.

"Someone has stolen our lunch!!! Looks like it's up to us Junior Detectives to solve the mystery!"

The kids all gasped and awed.

"So, how about it, kids? You want to learn how to solve a mystery?"

"Yeah!" shouted the kids.

The other counselors seemed confused, like it wasn't part of the plan. However, with a little nudge from Noriko, they seemed to go with the flow, and were happy once more.

The next few minutes was spent finding clues to this scavenger hunt, eventually leading to the meat that they wanted to barbeque.

So many kids had so much fun! Noriko could tell that this girl was under a lot of stress, so maybe a little relaxation and fun could help her out.

After all, this was the best Summer Camp Noriko's ever had!

Shinobu was glad.

Her plan worked. The kids had fun. The kids were so great.

Not to mention, she got to share her passion of being a detective. Shinobu felt really happy about that.

At this moment, Shinobu felt elated. Maybe these kids weren't so bad, after all.

Whatever trouble they may have caused her, they're only children.

Shinobu remembered her childhood, when she wanted to be a detective. Seeing these children like this reminded her of herself.

Shinobu felt happy, and that happy feeling continued to last for the whole day.

That night, Shinobu was prepared to go to sleep, when one of the counselors approached her.

"Shinobu, whatever happened to the rest of the meat?"

"Huh? Oh… Uh…"

"Shinobu… Did you eat them?" asked the counselor, with a smiling face.

Crap. She can't tell the truth.

Sheepishly, she replied.

"Ehehe… Yep. Sorry, what can I say… I had a big appetite, hehehe…"

She will never live this down.

“If you wanted some, you could’ve asked! We appreciate everything you did Shinobu!”

“R-Really? You do?”

“Yep! You were a great influence to these kids. They all liked you, and that surprise activity you did. Nice on-the-spot thinking. Very resourceful. I’ll write a report to your employer. He thinks very highly of you, and I can see why!”

Shinobu began to blush a bit.

Wow. She never realized that this was some kind of secret test. Maybe the Chief was on
to something.

There’s a week left in camp, and Shinobu was sure that her new goal.

Her new goal is to have fun and be an inspiration to these children.

Who knows, she might one day meet an apprentice who she can share her detective skills with.

Yeah, an apprentice. Someone she could teach and mentor, and pass her legacy. That would be nice.

Shinobu climbed on her bed, and went to sleep with a smile.